

Exhibit Titled 'It Takes a Lot of Guts'

Recollections of artist and art educator Andrew Yakscoe's introduction to art as a young boy evoke poignant memories for him from an especially difficult part of his life.

He will present an exhibit of his paintings, titled "It Takes a Lot of Guts," in Wilmington College's Harcum Art Gallery Aug. 31 through Oct. 14. An opening reception will be held Aug. 31, from 6 to 8 p.m. Normal gallery hours are weekdays from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Special appointments can be made by contacting curator Hal Shunk, professor of art,

via email at hal_shunk@wilmington.edu.

As a four-year-old, Yakscoe was diagnosed with a form of Lymphoma after the discovery of a tumor the size of a grapefruit, which resulted in his spending more than a half year in and out of surgeries and chemotherapy.

"One vivid memory I have from this time is my first experience coloring inside the lines," he said. "This may not qualify as a residency, but my history with cancer, without a doubt, served as a catalyst for my art career."

Yakscoe describes his works as reminiscent of Surrealist Automation, stream-of-consciousness writing and other mindful play activities.

"I employ physical and digital mark-making techniques as studio-based research into historical and contemporary modes of human expression and perception," he said. "Moreover, I partake in meaning-making activities as studio-based research into historical and contemporary modes of human expression and perception."

He added that he partakes in such "meaning-making activities" as art to remind people there is always something they can do to improve their immediate condition.

"It just sometimes takes a little creativity."

Yakscoe, an administrative assistant for the Division of Learning and Interpretation with Cincinnati Art Museum, holds a Bachelor of Fine Arts degree and visual arts education licensure from the University of Cincinnati's School of Art and College of Design, Architecture, Art and Planning.

He has exhibited extensively in Cincinnati and Columbus, and his technical expertise includes relief printmaking, lithography, intaglio, scree-printing, painting, drawing, ceramics and photography.



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51°

Bright future in the offing for Youngstown Thermal

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Customers of Youngstown Thermal can rest assured that the state of Ohio will not let the public utility go out of business. Gov. John R. Kasich's office is well aware that any disruption in service to the 40 users in Youngstown's central business district would put jobs at risk.

An inquiry by the editor of The Vindicator's Editorial Page about the availability of state grants to help stabilize the company's finances prompted a member of the governor's staff to contact several state agencies. Officials were forthcoming with information and guidance.

There also was a call to The Vindicator from the chairman of the Public Utilities Commission of Ohio, Asim Z. Haque⁹⁸, who reiterated the commission's commitment to ensure that Youngstown Thermal remains a viable company.

Indeed, the PUCO acted promptly after YT's Chief Executive Officer Carl Avers warned of an "energy crisis" in downtown Youngstown if the commission did not intervene.

The PUCO got the ball rolling on the appointment by the court of a receiver for the utility company.

On Aug. 1, Mahoning County Common Pleas Court Judge R. Scott Krichbaum selected Reg Martin of Martin Management Services in Columbus to take control of Youngstown Thermal.

The PUCO also has approved surcharges for YT's customers so the company can meet payroll expenses and pay its utility bills.

Here's what commission Chairman Haque had to say about Martin:

"We are happy to report that a receiver with deep experience, a receiver who has handled more than a few hundred receiverships, was recently appointed the receiver for Youngstown Thermal. However ... while it is an important step, the commission with the help of the community must

make every effort to ensure that continuous service is delivered to Youngstown Thermal's customers."

Meeting with customers

Martin, who recently hosted a meeting of the customers to elicit their opinions about Youngstown Thermal's service, is forming an advisory committee to assist him in developing a plan of action.

Martin is to be commended for reaching out to stakeholders at a time when reassurance about the company's future is clearly needed.

Indeed, out-of-town firms that provide individual heating and cooling systems for work places have been in contact with some YT customers. The promise of cost savings may be an effective sales pitch, but caution is strongly advised. There are long-term costs associated with individual energy systems that are not obvious and not always discussed.

Not every customer on Youngstown Thermal's steam-generated heating and cooling grid could afford to install its own system, which is why the Youngstown utility company must survive.

However, that will only happen if the 40 customers make a commitment to remain with Youngstown Thermal.

Indeed, any customer who chooses to leave the system after the strong support shown by the PUCO and the state of Ohio should be viewed as bad corporate citizens and ridiculed as such. This is especially true of the larger customers.

As we said at the outset, state government will not let the company fail because the Youngstown central business district deserves a dependable source of energy to remain economically viable.

There's another compelling reason to support the continued existence of Youngstown Thermal and assist Martin in stabilizing the company's finances. Despite its recent problems, Youngstown Thermal remains an attractive investment for energy companies that provide heating and cooling services.

We would not be surprised if there are suitors waiting in the wings for the right time to make an ownership bid.

Martin is working hard as the receiver to put the company on a firm financial footing so a prospective buyer can feel confident that there will be a return on investment.

His decision to form an advisory committee is a clear indication that he intends to consider the needs of the customers as he charts Youngstown Thermal's future.

Martin is worthy of our trust.

Business Meetings

Sayonara, Snoozy Sessions

Interactive, engaging events keep people plugged in.

By MIKE MAHONEY
+ Photo by ROB HARDIN

You can spot a lethal business gathering awfully fast: hundreds of chairs facing a podium, too many words on the first slide, digital media with endless branded visuals.

Then, as the first speaker begins, the sound system cuts out.

But interactive and engaging events—planners prefer that term to meetings—have become the standard of excellence, reaching hearts and minds with more than razzle-dazzle.



From left: Jordan Hansell, Jim Merkel, Michael Caligiuri, Doug Ulman

Photo courtesy ROCKBRIDGE

Two who know what it takes to make a meeting work, Jim Merkel, CEO of Rockbridge Capital, and Jason Barger, author and motivational speaker, say properly designed events can touch our emotions, hopes and dreams, and how we live out our shared values.

“I’ve heard story after story: ‘Our meetings are boring. Our last retreat was a flop,’” Barger says. “They describe one-way, one-sided communication, people talking at people. The participants’ role was to lap it up, retain it and somehow change.

“We live in a participatory world. Whether your examples are personal interaction via social media, or just the way we want to select a beer ... or even how we select our food when we

order, how we want it prepared to be uniquely ours, we all want to participate in the experiences we have.”

Barger’s latest book, *Thermostat Culture*, promotes intentional expectations for organizations. Barger and Howard Behar, the now-retired president of Starbucks Coffee International, will make the concepts play out in real time on Nov. 10 at Franklin Park, in an event they call “Thermostat Culture Live.”

It won’t be dull, Behar promises. “What works is short speeches and a lot of conversation, so that’s what I like to do,” he says. “People don’t want to just listen, they want to participate. I try not to do just speeches anymore. You don’t need a 45-minute

speech; you need something interactive. We learn from stories that people share with each other, not from speakers reciting things.”

In “thermostat cultures,” Behar says, the thermostat controls and sets the temperature. Without that clarity around what an organization is trying to create, it’s just a thermometer that reads the climate. “All day long we just react,” he says. “We need to decide what is the temperature I’m trying to set on the thermostat, not just what we do, but how we’re committed to doing it.

“My belief is that cultures are directly reflective of the leadership. If the leader’s a jerk, the culture will be filled with jerks. If the leader shows respect and dignity, that’s the kind of culture you’re going to have.”

Barger and Behar say organizational culture starts with individuals. “What do I have personal ownership of, and how can I play a personal part? If I’m passionate about an issue ... rather than sit around and get angry, I should be asking, ‘What is my control, my part of the solution?’” Barger says.

For Merkel at Rockbridge Capital, the way to become personally involved turned out to be a popular event that mixes support for cancer research, lots of bike-riding and lessons of leadership and innovation.

“For our event, the idea is we want people to come to be engaged, not to be over-programmed ... to be really thought-provoking.”

JIM MERKLE, CEO, Rockbridge Capital

Rockbridge Capital, investment funder for hospitality properties, hosts the “Rock the Road Experience,” which much of the regional hospitality industry now supports.

RTRX is a four-day event (Aug. 3-6) at the Greater Columbus Convention Center that matches participants with Rockbridge-sponsored cyclists in Pelotonia, the annual bicycling fundraiser for the research efforts of Ohio State University’s James Cancer Hospital. This year, RTRX features basketball great Bill Walton and Dan Pallotta, an advocate for building more dynamic and innovative nonprofit organizations.

Michael Caligiuri, MD, CEO of the James, and other experts from the hospital explore the frontiers of research each year with attendees, and a conversation between Merkel and Caligiuri was the genesis of this annual event.

More than 160 members of the RTRX Peloton rode in Pelotonia last year, and Merkel expects participation to grow to as many as 450 this year. Since 2011, RTRX has raised more than \$2.1 million for cancer research.

The goal of the event is to energize participants around leadership, innovation and cancer research, and that has to touch the heart, Merkel says.

“For our event, the idea is we want people to come to be engaged, not to be over-programmed, running from one session to another, but to be really thought-provoking,” he says. “We believe if we can make all our materials high-end and high-touch, people will have a good feeling. If we make our content engaging and interesting, that will make them think more deeply when they leave.

“For us, and for them, by doing business in this way, we want them to feel they’re doing great things for the community and themselves by attending, and that they’re doing something significant for cancer research.”

Mike Mahoney is a freelance writer.

Yellow Cab adopts tech to challenge Uber

By Tim Feran
The Columbus Dispatch

Ride-sharing services such as Uber have taken business away from traditional taxis. To better compete, Yellow Cab has begun using Verizon's Share Solutions to automate the cab-reservation and payment process for its Ohio fleet.

The Verizon technology, which Yellow Cab began using on Thursday, is designed to allow taxi drivers to more easily locate and rent available cabs, creating an on-demand, self-service approach to gaining access to vehicles.

Normally, drivers lease vehicles from Yellow Cab, and they can do so on a daily,

weekly or longer basis. But electronic paperwork is involved each time they do, which takes up drivers' time and adds to wait times for passengers awaiting pickup. Verizon's technology saves Yellow Cab's drivers time and money by enabling fleet-sharing citywide.

The new technology is "facilitating easier vehicle reservation and tracking across the board," said Morgan Kauffman, CEO of Yellow Cab, in a statement.

Yellow Cab's move makes sense, said David Smith, an associate vice president at digital-marketing agency Mindstream Interactive.

"The average person won't

necessarily care that the partnership with Verizon streamlines back-of-house administrative tasks," Smith said. "But they will care about the fact that Yellow can promise faster, more reliable, more easily-accessible service. It's unlikely to convert Uber or Lyft devotees, but it might be enough to get semi-regular Lyft and Uber riders to try, which could motivate a switch."

The growth of ride-sharing services and internet-connected applications, coupled with changing demographics, have encouraged cab companies, fleet managers and transportation providers to innovate in order to

compete. In the past few years, for example, Yellow Cab has launched an app that allows customers to book a cab with a tap of a button, and it also has heightened its presence on social media.

"If you combine great technology with hyper-local advertising, this can win back the millennials," said Jason Parks, owner of digital-marketing firm the Media Captain, which has worked with Yellow Cab. "Millennials like to support local businesses, and if social media is deployed correctly, this can definitely win them back."

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LEVEKUNST art of life (<http://levekunst.com/>)

REMEMBERING ETERNITY

In STORYTELLING (<http://levekunst.com/category/art/storytelling/>) by Rick

Maddox ¹⁷⁰ / 09/02/2017 / 0 Comments (<http://levekunst.com/remembering-eternity/#respond>)

Young Love Under the Moon

[your-view/](#)

Night had now come. Fairy light, from a waxing, gibbous moon that looked like a stone skull leaning back against the sky, a head colored in chamois and yoke ^{vast-}yellow, ^{kingdom/}its face blotchy and weathered as if from a thousand battles and a million tribulations, played upon the woods, streams and rocks around their tent. Their environment was delicately lit by gossamer, lambent, muted rays that informed it with the spirit of an elemental world, a realm ruled by soul rather than mind, where dancing imagination replaced plodding intellection.

This light was of a playful, feminine sort, with a soft burnish, all silvery-liquid metal, and seemed to be not earth's own but a reflection of illuminations from another universe. It was the light ruled by animals, one in which man retreated and the four-leggeds advanced. In this powdery diffusion, when the earth freed herself from the harsh glare, rasping tongue and domineering will of mankind, the nature spirits felt free to frolic. Humanity's night was their day. Ilona knew directly, and Skylar felt subconsciously, that all around them, romping in innocent amusement, were fairies and elves, sylphs, naiads, and salamanders, nixies, oreads, sprites, and trolls.

Mystical Experience

He felt that he had been dissolved as a discrete entity but had, in an incomparably advantageous exchange, been reconstituted as the vital center of everything. Ego had

nothing to do with this conception; on the contrary, the change allowed Skylar to see, in a profound way, that not only were all people and things in the universe interconnected, but that they all depended on one another. By virtue of being the terminal through which the traffic of the various macro – and microscopic energies got routed, Skylar sensed that the ocean constituted his bodily liquid; the stars, his all-seeing eyes, and the sand, the hairs on his gigantic body. No differentiation separated *him* and *it*, he could simply direct his attention to the sea and flow, or to the stars and shine, or to the beach and repose.

And the ground state of everything was love: not silly romantic love in which egos traded caressing strokes; not the mandated love for relatives, that resembled bottles of fine wine labeled to entice but empty once uncorked, not any love involving a lover and a beloved. This love could best be described as disinterested divine affirmation, the blind but all-comprehending approbation of everything, from the smallest quark to the most-immense quasar. This love was that which made everything else possible. This love assured the continuance of the mind-bogglingly complex movements that made up the material world; in the same way, this love had responsibility for the spiritual evolution of all life forms: guaranteeing the constant functioning of the laws of karma and the catholic forward march to realization

The Pacific Ocean

As Skylar sat there, arms entwining knees, thought replaced by wonder; as his eyes sailed what looked to be the endless Pacific, he became more intimate with the world than he had ever been. The plunging, chasmed depths of the ocean, inversions of the soaring, colossal peaks of the mountains, rising up to shelves and shores were, he saw, simply the bottom of a great tea cup whose beverage was the sea. And the land, thirsty for it, constantly tipped this 70-million-square-mile cup to its lips, splashing the liquid out of the vessel and then pulling it back in through the flow and ebb of the tides.

Skylar felt this close to the earth and its enveloping waters: that he saw them as a

pretty porcelain teacup, like the ones his grandmother used, the Meissen ones with sinuate sides painted in purple camaieu, brimful of sloshing tea. What a precious

feeling, to be so familiar with the great planet that he might have lifted it up by its delicate handle and tipped it precipitously forward, thereby causing the surf to surge far inland.

The surf's ever-recurring liquid whisper sounded like a hush-a-bye-baby lullaby purred by some invisible but all-loving mother to soothe his soul into gentle release. What deep satisfaction he found in this perpetual advance and recession, which nothing could stop, which would continue evermore; though man might laugh or cry or fight or die, this flow and ebb would play on for a thousand million years. Though wars raged and populations starved; though crafts reached other planets and carried explorers to them; though cities fell in rubble stacks as Gaia's muscles shuddered; though discoveries extended the longevity of the human body to centuries; though atmospheres got poisoned by the beta-radiative isotopes released by fissile explosions: still the sea would run up to the land like a curious child and then retreat like that same child in doubting shyness.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR



RICK MADDOX

Richard Dietrich Maddox grew up in the Midwest and graduated with honors from Princeton University. After graduation, he spent five years in Europe studying literature and preparing to teach meditation. He taught meditation full-time for two years before serving as the Vice President of Sales for seven successful high-tech startup companies. In 2005, he retired from the business world to concentrate on writing.

These People Are Making Money Off A Bogus Cancer Cure That Doctors Say Could Poison You

Apricot seeds can cure cancer — or so thousands of cancer patients believed in the 1970s, despite lots of evidence to the contrary. Now, in an era when natural remedies are no longer fringe and wellness is a multitrillion-dollar industry, this widely debunked theory has taken on a new life as a hydra-headed e-commerce ecosystem that regulators are virtually powerless to stop.

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Stephanie M. Lee
BuzzFeed News Reporter

More

John Richardson thought he'd found a cure for cancer.

The San Francisco Bay Area doctor had been giving patients a therapy that is essentially a chemical compound found in apricot kernels and known by several names — laetrile, amygdalin, vitamin B17. Richardson had been told it could attack tumors, naturally and precisely. It can also convert into potentially poisonous amounts of cyanide when eaten. But Richardson was a true believer.

“Yes, the evidence that Vitamin B17 is nature’s control for cancer is quite overwhelming,” he wrote in his [book](#). “So the next time you hear an official spokesman for orthodox medicine proclaim that there is none, you might tell him that such a statement is a ‘self-evident absurdity’ and suggest that he do his homework before posing as an expert.”

Less convinced were the police who, on June 2, 1972, [barged](#) into Richardson’s clinic and jailed him on charges of medical quackery. He eventually lost his medical license and was [charged](#) with smuggling laetrile, an illegal drug, into the country.

Now, three decades after Richardson’s death, his son, John Richardson Jr., is no stranger to apricot seeds.

Through [Apricot Power](#), his thriving e-commerce store, he sells [bitter seeds](#) (\$32.99 for 1,500), seed extract-based tablets (up to \$97.99 a bottle),



Apricot Power / Via [apricotpower.com](#)

and B17-infused anti-aging cream (\$49.99). [Recipes](#) for apricot-seed pesto, egg nog, and marzipan offer a “delicious and easy” way to work the supposed superfood into your diet, and [videos](#) explain why the site’s mission is to “get B17 into every body!” Though Richardson Jr. won’t reveal revenue numbers, he says his family operation of around 10 employees has served

“thousands” of customers all over the world since it launched in 1999.

But there’s a key difference between his business and his father’s, Richardson Jr. told me: “We don’t mention the C-word in our company.” Cancer, that is. If a customer review on Apricot Power’s website even mentions the term, the company leaves a comment pointing out that it doesn’t make any disease or illness-related claims about its products. Legally, it can’t: The FDA prohibits companies from selling laetrile, under any name, as a cancer treatment, because studies have found it to be at best ineffective, and at worst toxic.

Of course, that doesn’t stop dozens of internet entrepreneurs from exploiting regulatory loopholes to sell apricot seeds and B17 tablets, no claims attached — and profiting off the efforts of believers who spread the “truth” about them far and wide. In laetrile’s heyday in 1981, a doctor [called](#) it “the slickest, most sophisticated, and certainly the most remunerative cancer quack promotion in medical history.” Three decades later, the internet has only spread the gospel, creating an unstoppable, hydra-headed ecosystem of buyers and sellers.

If you’ve never heard that apricot kernels kill and prevent cancer, that’s because the government doesn’t want you to, proponents say. Cancer, according to them, arises from the lack of a nutrient they call vitamin B17, so it follows that ingesting that nutrient would fight the disease. But regulators, pharmaceutical companies, and doctors can’t patent and profit from a natural substance. So they keep it off the market and peddle toxic, invasive, costly, and unnatural chemotherapy and drugs at patients’ expense.

The internet has created an unstoppable, hydra-headed ecosystem of B17 buyers and sellers.

Or so the theory goes. “Vitamin B17 Is Banned Because It Treats Cancer!” a [post](#) on the site Healthy Food House proclaims; it has been liked, commented on, and shared on Facebook more than 47,000 times since September, according to the social media-tracking tool

CrowdTangle. A [post](#) about “the real story of laetrile,” published on a site called The Truth About Cancer, has gotten more than 44,000 likes, comments, and shares since June 2015.

Yin Ling Woo, a gynecological oncologist, recently had to decline when three cancer patients asked her to inject them with liquid B17 vials. “They buy it off the internet, it arrives, they have to get someone to administer it,” said Woo, who works in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia.

Over the last year and a half, public health agencies in the [European Union](#), [Canada](#), and [Dubai](#) have issued warnings about apricot kernels and kernel-derived supplements. Since Australia and New Zealand outright [blocked](#) the sale of raw kernels in late 2015, retailers have been [fined](#) for continuing to sell them. In April, the FDA fired off [warning letters](#) to the sellers of more

than 65 illegal cancer treatments, including whole apricots and vitamin B17. All the regulators cite the internet as the main source of the problem. "Due to the nature of online marketing, some companies attempting to avoid compliance with FDA law simply start new websites and rename fraudulent products," an FDA spokesperson told BuzzFeed News in an email.

In other words, the FDA lacks the power to systematically fix the underlying issue. It can go after apricot kernels advertised as a cancer cure. But it can't crack down when they're advertised as supplements or plain old seeds. Nor can it control the Facebook posts, YouTube videos, blogs, and tweets that perpetuate the myth.

And when the FDA calls out problematic claims, all a company has to do to escape scrutiny is stop using the phrases in question. "But the misimpression that their product is an effective cancer cure will remain out there, uncorrected, in the public eye," said Patti Zettler,¹⁹⁸ an associate professor at Georgia State University's law school and a former associate chief counsel at the FDA.

It's no coincidence that B17 is enjoying a second life online, at this moment in time. The internet is rife with misinformation about science and health, and the nutritional supplements business — as part of the larger "wellness" industry — is worth billions. Meanwhile, cancer remains a little understood disease that causes nearly 1 in 6 deaths worldwide. So in a way, it's comforting and intuitive to blame a fixable vitamin deficiency. It's also wrong.

Felicity Corbin-Wheeler of Jersey, an island south of England, credits intravenous infusions of B17 and a strict diet with shrinking her pancreatic cancer in 2003. She refused chemotherapy, which aligns with her belief that the "Western diet has been so hijacked by processed foods, sugars, fats, and salts."

"I'm all for the natural things," she said, "that we get back to a simple life."

A successful salesperson must buy into what they're selling, and Richardson Jr. is all in. Growing up in the Bay Area suburb of Orinda, he and his seven siblings weren't fed sugar or processed wheat, an abstinence he keeps up to this day. He says

he started eating apricot seeds for his health at age 5. Now 52, he's up to 40 a day.

The seeds contain amygdalin, a compound also found in apple seeds and almonds. In the 1950s, Ernst T. Krebs Jr., a self-described doctor and biochemist with no medical degree, patented a purified form of amygdalin that he called "laetrile." He also promoted it as "vitamin B17," although it's not an officially recognized vitamin.

In 1971, Krebs Jr. shared with the elder Richardson his theory of how this nutrient could stop cancer growth. As Richardson later summarized: "[N]ature's mechanism will not work if one fails to

eat the foods that contain this necessary vitamin, which is exactly what has happened to modern man, whose food supply has become further and further removed from the natural state."

In Richardson's day, "laetrilists" were just as controversial as the anti-vaccine movement is today. In the 1960s, the FDA banned laetrile and reported that there was no evidence it treated cancer. But over the next decade, more than 70,000 Americans took it anyway. Many of them crossed into Mexico for injections denied by their stateside doctors. Actor Steve McQueen secretly traveled to Baja in 1980 to receive laetrile, among other alternative remedies, for an advanced lung cancer. He died months later. In the mid-'70s, a scientist at Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center performed experiments that he said showed laetrile helped reduce tumors in mice. A media relations staffer then leaked the data, claiming that hospital executives had sought to cover up and discredit it. He's been making that claim ever since, including in the 2014 documentary Second Opinion ("for the conspiracy-minded only," the Los Angeles Times wrote), and now charges cancer patients \$500 for hourlong phone consultations.

In the mid-'70s, "laetrilists" were just as controversial as the anti-vaccine movement is today.

When the elder Richardson was arrested in 1972 (on charges that were dropped), it prompted his fellow members of the John Birch Society, the far-right conspiracist group of the era, to start a lobbying group to legalize laetrile. Later, Richardson was fined \$20,000 and placed on

probation on charges of conspiracy to smuggle laetrile from Mexico to the US. Indictments against him and 18 other accused promoters noted that he had deposited \$2.5 million in his bank account over two years.

Even so, Richardson Jr. remembers his father, who died in 1988, as "very principled, very honest, and very moral," and keeps a picture of him over his desk. "There's still people that contact me and tell me what a wonderful man he was and what a wonderful doctor he was," he said.

After long legal battles, the FDA's laetrile ban ultimately took effect in 1987. In 1999, Richardson Jr. started Apricot Power as an online-only store, but it's branched out to health food shops over the last five years to meet customer demand. The company sources apricots from its farm and others in California, removes the flesh, air-dries the pits at the center, cracks them open, and sells the seeds inside.

"A lot of the foods, the amygdalin's been cooked out of it," said Richardson Jr., who also operates a real estate firm and a restaurant. "And my dad believed a normal, healthy person should have 100 milligrams a day of amygdalin. That's been our company motto since the beginning, is just getting amygdalin back into every body."

It took me no more than a few seconds to find apricot seeds online. A Google search led me to Amazon, where a European vendor was selling a 1-pound bag for \$19.99 with this caveat: “We do not ‘treat’, or aim to ‘cure’ any disease.” Still, its customers leave reviews like “Raw Apricot Kernels help to stop

Cancer in its tracks” and “I expect no miracles, but I don’t want to die from chemotherapy.” The seeds turned out to be chewy and tongue-curlingly bitter, with a long and unpleasant aftertaste.

Amazon’s algorithm recommended that I also buy the book that’s the bible of this movement: World Without Cancer: The Story of Vitamin B17. First published in 1974 and now in its 24th printing, it’s by G. Edward Griffin, who has no scientific training, denies HIV, and pushes Sept. 11 conspiracy theories.

I tried to interview more than 35 e-commerce shops that sell seeds or supplements labeled as laetrile, amygdalin, or B17. Many declined to talk or never got back to me. A man at Raw Foods and Vitamins turned me down, explaining, “The FDA and the government agencies have gone wild, there’s so much money in Big Pharma. ... As soon as there’s a little publicity, they’ll be all over you.” He did, however, text me pro-laetrile books and websites to look up.

Others were more open. Danny Hesman, who runs B17 USA full-time out of Los Angeles, said he has 5,000 repeat customers. “I do tell people it’s not a magic pill,” he said. But like some other vendors, he’s had a personal experience with cancer — in his case, a friend who died from it. “I got a front-row seat to the suffering he went through with modern medicine,” he said. “I know these oncologists, I spoke to their team, they did everything. It’s almost career suicide for professionals to even consider alternative therapies, which leaves [B17] in that fringe zone you see when you google ‘vitamin B17.’ I wish there were some more professionals that would really work on that.”

Many vendors, especially those in the US, repeatedly emphasized that they weren’t claiming to cure, treat, or prevent anything, as if the FDA were listening over the phone. But Our Father’s Farm in Ontario, Canada, sells kernels that “may help with cancer prevention and symptoms.” Vision B Seventeen in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, claims to have “been successfully treating cancer and other degenerative diseases for more than 12 years now.”

Regulators have tried to squash these kinds of vendors. Jason Vale, a professional arm wrestler in New York City, sold seeds as

a cure on his website, Apricots From God, because he believed they’d healed his kidney cancer. He also spammed people with millions of email ads. But in 2003, Vale was sentenced to five years in prison for criminal contempt of a court injunction sought by the FDA to stop him selling.

“Laetrile (i.e. Vitamin B17) therapy is one of the most popular and best known alternative

cancer treatments.”

unsupported health claims. According to the agency, which sent similar warnings to 13 other businesses, Oxygen had also illegally described vitamin C, the fruit graviola, and flax seed oil as cancer therapies.

Owner Michael Carroll said by phone that many of his products personally helped him fight off non-Hodgkin’s lymphoma. He scrubbed the language targeted by the FDA. But he didn’t seem too worried that his business would take a hit, or that his promises could have harmed someone.

“We’re continuing to work to make the best corrections to make our website as blah as possible, so consumers remain uneducated,” said Carroll, who lives near Chicago. When we spoke in early May, Oxygen was still selling B17 bottles for up to \$97; they’ve since been taken down.

But you can still get them from Amygdalin Supply. Call to place an order and you might chat, as I did, with customer service rep Carlos Oguin in Guadaluajara, Mexico. I asked him, in his opinion, what he was selling could really treat cancer. His customers, he replied, were all the proof he needed.

“If you go to a store and buy a product and the product doesn’t work for you, would you buy again?” he asked. “Of course not, because the product does not work. That’s the thing I see. The same people who buy are the same people who are going to buy next and next and next.”

Sandi Rog, a novelist outside Denver, Colorado, says that B17 saved her and can save others, too. She spreads the message on her blog, I Beat Cancer with Vitamin B17, and in three YouTube videos with a total of more than 956,000 views.

When Rog was diagnosed with non-Hodgkin’s T-cell lymphoma in late 2010, doctors put her through chemotherapy, radiation, and a stem cell transplant in an attempt to reinvigorate her immune system, she said. But tumors kept popping up. After a naturopathic doctor gave her dozens of supplements, she

B17 merchants may have been deterred by his conviction, but not defeated. Until recently, Oxygen Health Systems allegedly told customers, “Laetrile (i.e. Vitamin B17) therapy is one of the most popular and best known alternative

cancer treatments.” This spring, the FDA slammed Oxygen with a warning letter for making that and other

eventually narrowed them down to a regimen of juicing, pancreatic enzymes, and B17, which she began reading about and ordering online. She also stopped taking her prescribed immunosuppressant drugs. By the end of 2012, she said, the tumors were gone and she was in remission.

"It makes me so angry, because people are

"All I know is I'm cancer-free," she said, "and it's because of this."

being ripped off."

Catherine Fox found Rog's videos "very impressive" when she started researching B17 as a preventative

measure against cancer. Her parents, five aunts, and three uncles have all died of various cancers, she says. Then, about three years ago, she felt a lump in her breast — the moment she'd been dreading. So she started taking kernels. That's likely why, she thinks, the lump ended up being harmless.

"It seemed to just go down and go away," said Fox, who lives in Kells, Ireland, and, just to be safe, still eats two seeds every morning.

But Liz Beggs says that these stories offer a sense of false hope that harms people like her late niece, Charlene Campbell.

Campbell had a daughter who, not long after she was born, developed a rare, aggressive brain cancer and died. More than five years later, Campbell developed cancer, too, in her breast. Having watched her daughter undergo chemotherapy and radiation, she was determined to avoid them herself. So she started juicing, eating an all-vegetarian diet, and ordering cannabis oil and apricot seeds online. "She said, 'This is my journey, it's my body, I have to do it on my own,'" recalled Beggs, who lives in Northern Ireland. "You're either with me or against me."

Beggs understood why Campbell distrusted conventional therapies, but "at the same time, we were so fearful," she said. Campbell's tumor kept growing until she finally agreed to have a mastectomy. Then new tumors sprouted in her liver and spine.

Campbell died in October 2015, soon after her 33rd birthday. By the end, she was up to 40 apricot kernels a day, her aunt said.

"It makes me so angry because people are being ripped off," Beggs said. "That fear that engulfs a person when they're diagnosed with cancer, they want to hold on to something that's positive, not the medical route. They want to hold on to this sick holistic path of believing in kernel seeds and whatever else across the internet."

Promoters of this all-natural cure can't agree on one name for it — amygdalin, laetrile, Laetrile with a capital L, B17? Nor do they agree on how much to take and how often. Nor is there a way to ensure that the many seeds, pills, powders, and liquids in which it can take form are chemically consistent. All these variables make it hard to study its supposedly wondrous effects.

A 2015 review looked at the available studies of laetrile and amygdalin in humans and found "no reliable evidence" that they could cure cancer. On the whole, it concluded, the chances of bad side effects made the risks "unambiguously negative."

In 1982, the Mayo Clinic put 178 cancer patients on laetrile, enzymes, vitamins, and a restricted diet, a regimen based on several laetrile doctors' recommendations. When it came to getting cured, seeing their symptoms improve or disease stabilize, or living longer, they didn't substantially improve. On average, they survived less than five months after starting treatment.

"I do remember some of the patients wanting it to be continued, believing it was working even though their tumor had clearly grown, they had gotten weaker and clearly more sick," said Gregory Sarna, a study co-author who was a UCLA oncologist at

the time. "That did not dissuade some of them from their belief that it was working."

Several patients also showed signs of poisoning, like nausea and vomiting, and blood levels of cyanide known to be fatal.

It doesn't take much. More than three small kernels, or less than half a large one, can be unsafe for adults, according to a report for the European Food Safety Authority. Even one small kernel can be toxic for toddlers. From 2000 to 2004, there were reports of 260 children poisoned by kernels in Turkey, where they are a common snack. One 2-year-old girl was severely poisoned and died after she ate 10 seeds. Laetrile fans, however, tend to promote much higher doses: One blogger cites World Without Cancer's recommendation of 3 to 5 seeds per waking hour to treat cancer, and 7 to 10 a day to prevent it.

None of these contradictions faze consumers, who say scientists and doctors design studies to fail. They question whether people have really gotten sick or died from apricot kernels — and if they did, they probably took way too much. ("I never had a bad experience," said Elif Ercanli, who grew up eating seeds in Istanbul, Turkey.) The most they'll admit to is a bad side effect here or there. Rog said she once took nine in a 12-hour span and "my blood pressure crashed so low, I was in bed, I had tingling in my fingers and toes."

When I asked people to explain how amygdalin works, they paraphrased, or told me to look up, *World Without Cancer*. According to Griffin, when amygdalin dissolves in body fluids and produces hydrogen cyanide, the cyanide only goes after cancer cells because of a special enzyme they contain that's vulnerable to attack.

That explanation doesn't make sense to Sarna, who is now an oncologist at Cedars-Sinai Medical Center. He points out that cancer cells differ even within a single tumor — which is usually why when a treatment destroys some cells, others remain untouched. "To say [one enzyme] is a general characteristic of cancer would need a study of hundreds of thousands of fresh

cancers, all different cancers," he said. "I've never seen that done."

"There's no doctor in the world who doesn't want to help their patient get better. I never quite understood why there's this conspiracy theory that doctors or pharmaceutical companies would

Even if there were one magical mechanism that unlocked the cure to cancer, Wendy Chen, a breast oncologist at Dana-Farber Cancer Institute, takes offense at the notion that physicians would cover it up.

"There's no doctor in the world who doesn't want to help their patient get better," she said. "I never quite understood why there's this common conspiracy theory that doctors or

pharmaceutical companies would have an interest in suppressing something that works."

pharmaceutical companies would have an interest in hiding or suppressing something that works."

Nevertheless, Griffin's theories still light up Facebook groups like

"Cancer! Is B17 the cure?" Brandon Clark, who says apricot seeds and B17 tablets got rid of a skin cancer on his nose, moderates the 3,000-person group. When he started contributing, he read B17 books and talked to B17-prescribing doctors "to make sure people had the best information possible." Clark, who lives near

Tacoma, Washington, prefers to share that research on Facebook because it's "much more popular than Twitter and Myspace and anything else," he said. "I felt like I could reach more people."

He's not wrong.

"They're preying on people who are vulnerable and ill," Beggs said of people like Clark. "It's just so not right. It makes me angry. They're being brainwashed. Charlene's proof of that."

Apricot kernel devotees are fond of a certain Bible verse, Genesis 1:29: "Then God said, 'I give you every seed-bearing plant on the face of the whole earth and every tree that has fruit with seed in it. They will be yours for food.'" There is an intuitive appeal to this implicit idea, that a higher force designed a natural substance to fight off a devastating and inexplicable disease.

Cancer kills 1 in 4 men and 1 in 5 women in the US. And surgery, chemotherapy, and radiation can sound frightening on their own, since they involve cutting open the body and flooding it with drugs and X-rays. The side effects range from unpleasant to downright unbearable.

"They're preying on people who are vulnerable and ill. It's just

So there has always been an appetite, to some degree, for alternative therapies. And because of the enormous power of placebos, people

so not right. It makes me angry. They're being brainwashed."

often do feel better after taking them. In 1979, when the Supreme Court ruled that terminally ill cancer patients did not have the right to access laetrile, it noted that entrepreneurs had long hawked

cancer cures like "liniments of turpentine, mustard, oil, eggs, and ammonia; peat moss; arrangements of colored floodlamps; pastes made from glycerin and limburger cheese; mineral tablets; and 'Fountain of Youth' mixtures of spices, oil, and suet."

But in 2017, once-fringe "natural" remedies are no longer distinct from the mainstream obsession with wellness, now a \$3.7 trillion industry spanning organic food, yoga, meditation apps, anti-aging lotions — and dietary supplements. Lifestyle guru Gwyneth Paltrow and alt-right fearmonger Alex Jones peddle silver nanoparticles and obscure mushrooms. In addition to being taken by 150 million people in the US, supplements are barely regulated, can contain anything, aren't proven to help health, and send at least 20,000 Americans to the emergency room annually.

"The fact there is a resurgence of interest in selling and utilization of what is essentially an ineffective treatment is concerning, and it points to general problems with the supplement market," said Ameet Sarpatwari, an instructor at Harvard Medical School, of B17. "The amount of money being spent out there in supplements is huge. You would think that it should be more well-regulated than it is."

The wellness industrial complex is built upon vague pronouncements and falsehoods about how nutrition and bodies work, like the (unsupported) myth that genetically modified food is unsafe to eat. But if you buy into that, then perhaps it's not so crazy to also believe that, say, the Hunza, an indigenous group in northern Pakistan, are cancer-free thanks to their apricot-heavy diet. (According to anthropologists, there are no credible studies to support the claim, which is central to the B17 ideology.)

"The fact there is a resurgence of interest in selling and utilization of what is essentially an ineffective treatment is concerning, and it points to general problems with the supplement

As the internet breathes new life into health myths, it complicates the relationship between patients and doctors. No longer are physicians the main or exclusive source of medical information when people can Google a remedy, buy it on Amazon, and tell their Facebook friends about it.

So when cancer patients get excited about laetrile, or any other alternative therapy, doctors must balance the evidence, or lack thereof, with the desperation of people often on the verge of death. "People need control

market.”

over something that they cannot

control, and that is very, very

frustrating, and I sense it with every person I treat,” said Don Dizon, clinical co-director of gynecologic oncology at Massachusetts General Hospital Cancer Center and a spokesperson for the American Society of Clinical Oncology.

“Natural,” though, does not mean “safe.” Toxins, cyanide included, abound in the natural world. “All that matters is what are the benefits and harms, what is known for certain and what is merely unknown,” said Vinay Prasad, a hematologist-oncologist at Oregon Health and Science University, by email.

One patient of Prasad’s wanted to try high doses of vitamin C, but resisted radiation therapy because it seemed “unnatural.” “Of course,” Prasad noted, “both vitamin C and radiation are naturally occurring, and both high dose [vitamin C] and a radiation machine are a human manipulation of something natural, so I wasn’t sure there is a difference.”

Dizon isn’t always confident that chemotherapy will work, particularly in people whose cancer has returned, so he encourages some of them to push back. He’s even seen some tumors shrink after patients have taken natural remedies — and he’s accepted that he can’t explain why. Sometimes, doctors say, a person may not actually have cancer in the first place, due to an incorrect diagnosis or misinterpreted biopsy. Or tumors can shrink due to other therapies that a patient has forgotten about or hasn’t revealed.

Regardless, a couple moving anecdotes aren’t license to recommend an unproven remedy. “That would be wrong, because that’s not data,” Dizon said. “That’s not the same thing as saying, ‘Your mom has ovarian cancer. If she’s taking treatment, she has a 30% chance of cure and an 80% chance of going quite some time, even maybe years, before her cancer comes back.’”

With alternative therapies, the success stories that people cling to tend to be more isolated than they think. “You’re not hearing the other side of that — the patients who took it and died within weeks or whose cancers really grew,” he said.

Vitamin B17, by any name, will never disappear. Its story by now has taken on mythical proportions that cannot be censored.

New advances in cancer treatment may one day make apricot seeds obsolete. But until — even if — all these therapies become the new and highly successful standard of care, some segment of laetrile believers will continue to buy in.

At Apricot Power, Richardson Jr. is busy rolling out products such as [chocolate bars](#) with chopped-up apricot seeds. (“What a tasty way to get natural B17 in your diet!” the website proclaims.)

What would his father think of all this? He’d be happy, Richardson Jr. answered, because he predicted that someday “people would discover that nutrition was the answer to healthy living.” He added, “Lots of people believe an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure.”

KYLE KATZ BUYS PROMINENT BREWERY DISTRICT BUILDING

A prominent Brewery District office building has a new owner.

NAI Ohio Equities has brokered the sale of 555 S. Front St. to a Kyle Katz affiliate. The building has 41,460 square feet.

The deal also includes a 5,193-square-foot building at 551 S. Front St.

The 555 building was built by the Edwards Cos. in 1997 and had fallen into financial trouble.

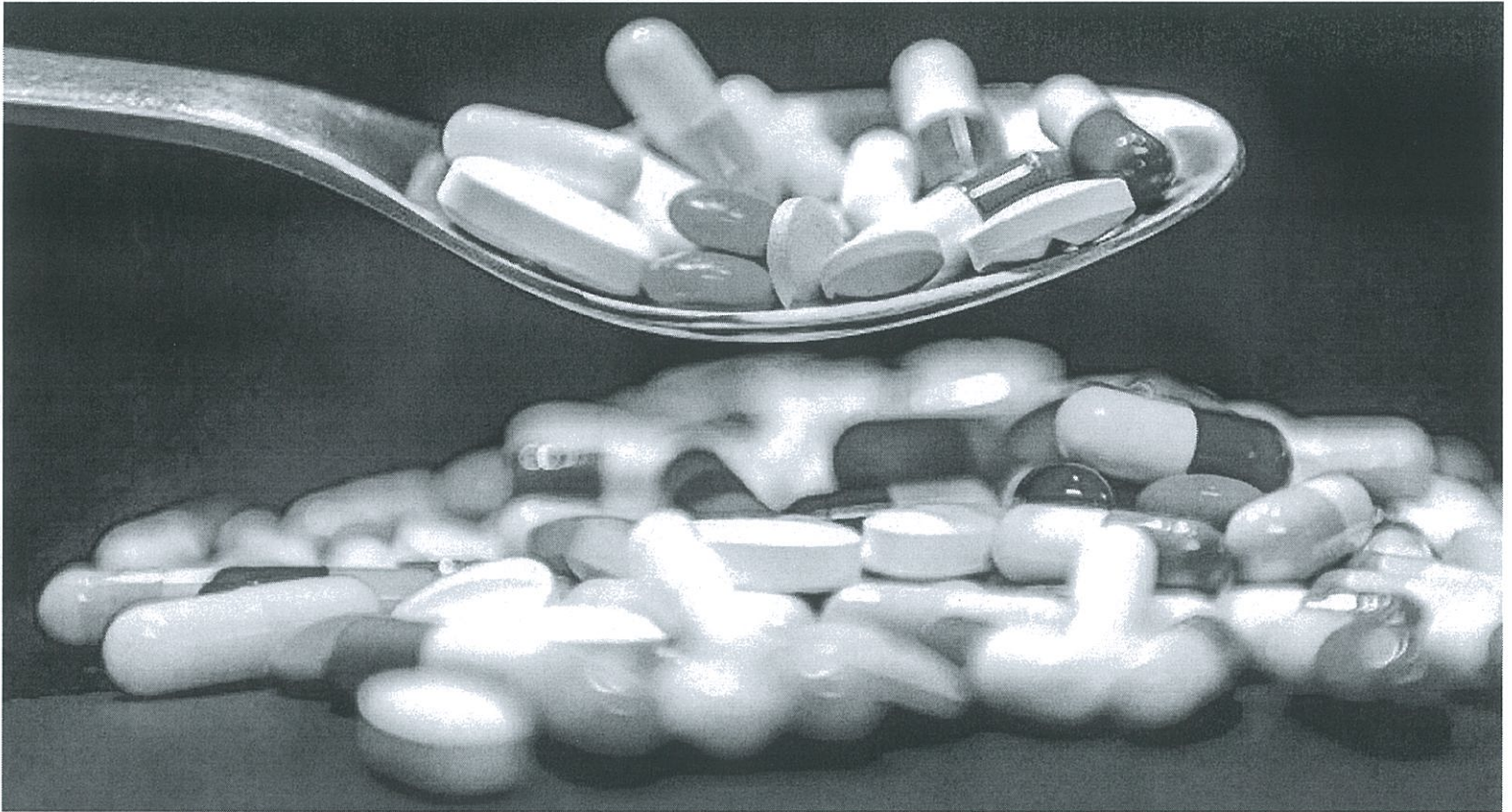
Katz told me he bought the properties as a “long-term hold.” These are “great buildings and we’re excited to have them in our portfolio.”

HEALTH CARE

Libertarians score big victory in 'right-to-try' drug bill

The bill would let very sick patients seek unapproved treatments.

By **SARAH KARLIN-SMITH** | 08/03/2017 08:42 PM EDT | Updated 08/04/2017 09:55 AM EDT



The legislation would allow patients with serious diseases to request access to experimental drugs directly from drug companies without having to go through the FDA. | Philippe Huguen/AFP/Getty Images

The Senate unanimously approved a bill Thursday that would allow people facing life-threatening diseases access to unapproved experimental drugs, providing a victory for libertarian advocates who see government regulators thwarting patients' rights.

The bill, S. 204 (115), passed swiftly and easily in a Senate bitterly divided over health care. The powerful pharmaceutical lobby, which had quietly opposed an earlier version, kept an unusually low profile. The industry has been focused on fighting off any efforts to go after drug pricing, which

President Donald Trump has said he would tackle.

The bill's chief champion, Sen. Ron Johnson (R-Wis.), declared it a victory for individual liberty over government, and for "the right to hope." It's also been championed by the libertarian Goldwater Institute, and Vice President Mike Pence, who tweeted that it gives patients "hope & a chance."

The legislation would allow patients with serious diseases — anything from a late-stage cancer to multiple sclerosis — to request access to experimental drugs directly from drug companies without having to go through the FDA, which has its own compassionate use program that approves 99 percent of requests.

But the right-to-try bill doesn't require drugmakers to make the experimental treatments available. In the 37 states that have similar laws on the books, Goldwater can point to only one doctor who says he has utilized a state right-to-try law for a patient — and that medicine was being made available to certain patients by the FDA anyway.

That's led some critics to call it "right-to-ask" — and it may give desperately ill people false hopes.

"This bill is inherently deceptive," Alison Bateman-House, a medical ethicist at New York University who led the charge against Johnson's bills, wrote in an email. "What [patients] have a right to (and did long before this bill) is to ask drug companies for permission to use their experimental drugs outside of clinical trials. If the drug company says no, both before and after this legislation, that's the final word: neither the FDA nor the courts have to power to make companies provide access to their experimental drugs-in-development."

ADVERTISING



And if the experimental drugs do become widely used outside the standard clinical trial system, it could undermine some of the rigorous science needed to know whether medicines are safe and effective. Many drugs that start the clinical trial process flop. Some are harmful.

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“You have a situation where patients think they want to take a risk and don’t necessarily understand what risk they are taking,” said Diana Zuckerman, president of the National Center for Health Research, which lobbied against the bill.

And while the revised bill would require annual reports on whether the drugs used by these patients helped — or potentially harmed — them, patient safety experts are concerned it may not be enough.

But it’s hard for lawmakers to say no to “hope.”

“Opposing right-to-try laws is akin to opposing motherhood, apple pie, and the American flag; you just don’t do it and expect to be re-elected,” David Gorski, an oncologist at Wayne State University, wrote in his blog on science-based medicine. It’s easier for a senator to vote for the bill than to explain to constituents the nuances of why the new law might not help them — and might even harm them.

PhRMA issued a statement — but declined to say whether it now supported the bill, which must still be approved by the House after the summer recess. “We appreciated the opportunity to work with Sen. Johnson and look forward to continuing to work with his office,” it said. “The revised Right to Try legislation that passed the Senate includes important protections for patient safety and the clinical trial process.”

Senate HELP Chairman Lamar Alexander (R-Tenn.) and ranking Democrat Patty Murray (D-Wash.) — the same duo who are about to embark on bipartisan Obamacare “stabilization” hearings — played a role in helping Johnson work out a compromise. Alexander told POLITICO after the vote that Johnson “tried to run it by everyone who was affected,” including the pharmaceutical industry, trial lawyers and patients. “I’m very happy for him and the patients around the country who will benefit from it.”

Sen. Joe Donnelly (D-Ind.), one of the few Democrats who had been in favor of it all along, said more liberal members “all wanted to step up” once the revised bill was explained to them.

FDA also worked behind the scenes to push for changes to make the bill safer for patients.

Not every senator endorses the libertarian rhetoric about getting federal regulators out of patients' way that propelled right-to-try — a key theme of the message the Goldwater Institute took through the states and to Washington.

“There’s no more fundamental freedom than the right to save your own life. Right to Try guarantees that freedom by ensuring that patients, along with their doctors, are in control of the treatments they receive when facing a terminal diagnosis,” Goldwater's president and CEO Victor Riches said in a statement after passage.

But more liberal lawmakers faced significant lobbying, featuring heartbreaking stories of young children or newlyweds facing shortened lives. Meanwhile, the most powerful opposition, the drug industry and doctors' groups, kept their disagreement very low-profile. Their soft voices gave lawmakers little political protection for a “no” vote.

“There’s no doubt about it — there are a lot of patients out there that think this is the answer to their prayers. ... They certainly believed that, and they pushed their members of Congress to support a bill that in many cases the members of Congress thought was not a good idea,” said Zuckerman.



West Virginia Democratic governor switches to GOP

By MATTHEW NUSSBAUM, GABRIEL DEBENEDETTI, KEVIN ROBILLARD and DANIEL STRAUSS

PhRMA's low-profile on right-to-try hurt detractors from the outset. The industry group never took a formal position on the state right-to-try laws or earlier federal proposals. But it consistently reiterated its concerns about any approach to experimental medicines that sought to bypass the FDA and the clinical trial process. Of the major drug makers, only Merck formally came out against the earlier Johnson bill.

“It’s huge,” NYU's Bateman-House said of PhRMA's reluctance to take a stronger public stance. “When I speak with legislators, they say, ‘Well if it’s that bad, why isn’t pharma speaking against it?’”

Critics of right-to-try concede the final Senate bill is much improved from earlier versions. It adds crucial safeguards that should help protect patients' safety — and their pocketbooks, as they can no longer be charged excessive amounts for unproven drugs.

But the critics, including bioethicists, safety advocates and researchers, still worry about the risk of undermining an agency like the FDA — an important safety regulator that has ensured that drugs are studied in controlled settings so FDA can make informed decisions to approve or disapprove them.

The bill looks to be an "improvement," said Patti Zettler^{'98}, a professor at Georgia State University and former associate chief counsel at FDA. "However, the fundamental problem with the bill is not resolved in that it still envisions removing, or drastically reducing, FDA's role in expanded access."

And it may fall short — an example of Congress checking a box, but not really solving a problem.

"It's something where your reluctant representative can claim they are taking action but does not effectively address root problems," said Ameet Sarpatwari of Harvard Medical School. "We've seen this with rising drug prices, and now we see it with experimental treatment. It is a show, but it is also dangerous in the sense that it furthers this sort of attack on FDA as somehow being antithetical to the interest of patients."

Correction: A previous version of this story misidentified Patti Zettler's affiliation. She is a professor at Georgia State University.

Rainey Taylor

Taylor, Rainey

Rainey S. Taylor, Jr., died August 22, 2017 at the age of 93. He was born in Middletown, NY, son of Rainey Startup and Irene Jordan Taylor and was a loving, compassionate and giving son/husband/father/ brother/son-in-law/ brother-in-law, friend and an extraordinary history teacher. Dad was accepted into Harvard Law School following in his father's footsteps to become a lawyer. Dad knew his passion was to teach history so he passed on law school and attended Columbia University Teachers' College graduating with a master's degree in history. His first teaching position was at the all-male, Morristown School (now Morristown-Beard), in Morristown, NJ. From there the family moved to Columbus, Ohio where Dad taught at the Columbus Academy then on Nelson Road. He never regretted his decision to teach and dedicated his career to his students, helping them not just learn but understand history. After 31 years at the Columbus Academy, he retired. Teaching was his passion and his legacy will continue through the Rainey S. Taylor, Jr. History Chair at the Columbus Academy. Dad wanted the funds from his chair to benefit and enrich the life of current and future history teachers at the Columbus Academy. Rainey graduated from Lawrenceville School, Princeton University, and Columbia University Teachers College. During World War II he served in the Army in Europe. Rainey was predeceased by his wife Mary E. Van Keuren Taylor, and is survived by his daughters, Anne Caldwell Taylor of Somerset, NJ, Mary Ten Eyck Taylor of Bexley, OH and Susan Jordan Taylor of Rumford, RI; his sister, Mary Taylor Sherpick (Bill); sister-in-law, Marjorie V. K. Winter (John) of Wichita, KS; and numerous nieces, nephews, grandnieces and -nephews and dear friends. At his request, there will be no funeral service, only a family gathering at the interment in the family plot at Hillside Cemetery in Middletown, NY. In lieu of flowers, family requests that donations be made in his memory to Rainey S. Taylor, Jr. History Chair at the Columbus, Academy, 4300 Cherrybottom Road, Gahanna, OH 43230. Arrangements by SCHOEDINGER MIDTOWN CHAPEL, 229 East State Street, Columbus, OH 43215.

Funeral Home**Schoedinger Funeral Home Midtown Chapel**

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